



GRIP Training Institute's GRIP Curriculum

Guiding Rage Into Power: A Comprehensive Accountability and Healing Program

The GRIP approach is a best-practices methodology that has been developed over 20 years of working with thousands of incarcerated people, originally in San Quentin State Prison. This program offers an in-depth journey into the participants' ability to understand and transform violent behavior and replaces it with an attitude of emotional intelligence. **The 1-year long program** helps participants to comprehend the origins of their violence and develop the skills to track and manage strong impulses before they are acted out in destructive ways. Students become "emotionally literate" by fully understanding feelings of anger and rage, learning to recognize the body signals that accompany those emotions, and engage in a process to stop and discharge the buildup of tension in a safe manner. The course helps participants to identify and communicate the feelings underneath anger and process the grief, fear and shame masked by anger. Students also develop the skills to identify and express the unmet needs that fuel the experience of rage.

The GRIP (Guiding Rage into Power) Program has a distinct focus. Most rehabilitation programs singularly zero in on either academic or vocational purposes or addiction recovery. These are important efforts, yet they would be optimized by directly addressing the root causes of what leads someone to offend were addressed effectively. Our methodology consists of a transformational re-education modality that commits the participants to a process of deep self-inquiry and healing. The program offers a strong re-socialization element. It examines the origins of criminogenic conduct and undoes the characteristic destructive behavioral patterns that lead to transgressions. Participants learn to:

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| 1. Stop and Transform Their Violence | 3. Develop Emotional Intelligence |
| 2. Cultivate Mindfulness | 4. Understand Victim Impact |

The program is a trauma treatment-based model that integrates the latest brain research and assimilates various principles of restorative justice. It addresses the unprocessed pain from which people lash out. Participants partake in a process of creating an inventory of 'unfinished business' that relate to traumatic experiences that have become formative defense mechanisms, which in turn generate triggered reactions. They make a personal history of 'violence suffered' and 'violence perpetrated' to gain insight into origins and patterns of behavior. Students sign a pledge to be non-violent and have a year to learn how to keep the pledge.

The program functions as a peer education model where selected and trained students co-facilitate the classes and mentor newer students. All participants are to become fully engaged as integral stakeholders. The program employs a methodology that is called 'normative culture' wherein the students cultivate intrinsic motivation by being actively involved in both setting and enforcing the standards and norms that are integral to the course. This central value of the program ensures maximum ownership of the participants for their own learning process. The program actively interacts with the community by inviting in guest teachers, victims, CDCR officials and other community members.

The program integrates three didactic modalities: *Instruction* functions as a means to teach the information that is crucial to the program's theoretical framework. *Process* refers to the various exercises employed to work with a deep layer of emotional material that must be acknowledged, expressed and integrated in order for insight and understanding to occur. *Practice* anchors the acquired insights into a durable behavior by spending time learning how to embody what has been learned. Practicing the GRIP tools makes the insight operational as pro-social behavior.